

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: Antonino Conte, Gianbattista Lo Giudice, and Alfredo Signorello

Title: SENSING CIRCUITRY FOR READING AND VERIFYING THE CONTENTS OF ELECTRICALLY PROGRAMMABLE AND ERASABLE NON-VOLATILE MEMORY CELLS, USEFUL IN LOW SUPPLY-VOLTAGE TECHNOLOGIES

Serial Number: 10/662,151

Filing Date: September 12, 2003

Examiner/Unit: Viet Q. Nguyen / 2816

Attorney Docket No.: 2110-008-05

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING OR TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited in the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2004.

*Kelly Redmon*  
Signature

**RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT UNDER 37 CFR § 1.143**

TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS:

In response to the August 4, 2004 restriction requirement under 35 USC § 121, the Applicants' attorney elects Group I claims 1-8 for prosecution with traverse. The reasons for traverse are presented below.

First, the Examiner's restriction of Group III claims 14-28 is moot because Group I and II claims 1-13 are the only claims pending in this divisional application. Referring to the Request for Filing Application (copy enclosed) filed with this divisional application on September 12, 2003, claims 14-28 are cancelled (these claims were allowed in the parent application).

Second, because the Examiner can perform a single search and examination that will cover claims 1-13, and because the number of independent claims and the number of

total claims are relatively small, the Examiner can search and examine the application without serious burden, and, therefore, **MUST** examine all of the claims 1-13 together. According to MPEP § 803, if the Examiner can search and examine the application without serious burden, then he/she **MUST** examine the application on the merits even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. The ability to perform a single search and examination for all of the claims and the existence of relatively few independent and total claims indicate a lack of serious burden on the Examiner. Because claims 1-13 recite similar subject matter, the Examiner can perform a single search and examination that will cover all of the claims 1-13. Specifically, independent claim 1 recites a circuit for reading a memory cell, and independent claim 9 recites a method for reading a memory cell. As evident by the number of limitations (e.g, read node, reference node, first and second bias currents) common to claims 1 and 9, the circuit recited in claim 1 can implement the method recited in claim 9. Therefore, single search will yield references that apply to both sets of claims 1-8 and 9-13. Furthermore, claims 1-13 include only two independent claims (claims 1 and 9) and thirteen total claims.

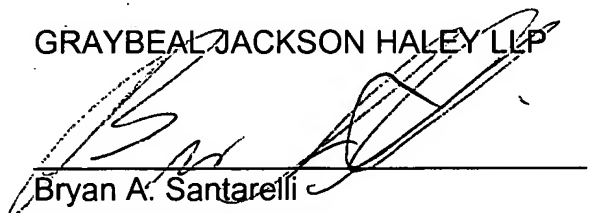
In the event additional fees are due as a result of this amendment, payment for those fees has been enclosed in the form of a check. Should further payment be required to cover such fees you are hereby authorized to charge such payment to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

If the Examiner believes that a phone interview would be helpful, he is respectfully requested to contact the Applicants' attorney, Bryan Santarelli, at (425) 455-5575.

DATED this 2nd day of September, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

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